

Announcement of Federal Funding for the Meadowview Health Clinic and Community Center (April 28, 2006)

Meadowview, Virginia

I am pleased to return to Meadowview this morning to announce a major provision of federal funding which will establish a new facility that will provide low cost medical services to Washington County residents. At my request, the U.S. Department of Agriculture through its Rural Development Agency, is providing a low-interest loan in the amount of \$251,000 to Meadowview First, for the construction of a community health clinic as part of the new Meadowview Health Clinic and Community Center.

The new 3,000 square foot clinic will be located on the lower level of the Center and will provide primary health care services on a sliding-fee scale based on the patient's income. The clinic will be outfitted with eight exam rooms and four doctor's offices. The Southwest Virginia Community Health Systems, under the direction of Howard Chapman, will initially provide 1 physician and 1 nurse practitioner. As demand for the Clinic grows, the staff will increase to accommodate the needs of the community. In addition to primary health care services, the clinic will provide preventative care, immunizations, family planning, health physicals, lab work, minor emergency care, and mental health counseling.

It is anticipated that the Clinic will have between five and six thousand patient visits in the first year and that most of these patients will be either uninsured or underinsured. The Clinic's services will become a welcome and much needed addition to the Meadowview Community and Washington County.

The Health Clinic will be but one aspect of the outstanding new facility, which is the first step in the revitalization of Meadowview Square. The upstairs portion of the 6,000 square feet facility will feature classrooms for after school activities, adult literacy programs, English as Second Language training, and GED completion. The Center will also feature meeting rooms, a conference area, and kitchen space for general community use.

Meadowview First's goal in creating this community center is to provide Meadowview residents with additional tools and resources to compete for quality jobs. . With the establishment of both health care and educational services at the center, Meadowview First is achieving an important goal.

The total cost of the expansion and renovation project is \$1,500,100. In addition to the \$251,000 in federal funds I am announcing today, a federal Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$700,000 was previously provided in support of the project. The Virginia Healthcare Foundation is providing a grant in the amount of \$150,000, and the Washington County Board of Supervisors is providing an additional \$25,000 for the Center. This project was aided considerably by a \$250,000 contribution from the Carolyn Levine Foundation and a generous \$100,000 donation from Alice Dow.

The success that we are celebrating today is also made possible by many generous and thoughtful individual contributions. The Center has raised considerable funds from Meadowview residents, community supporters, churches, and Emory and Henry College's Appalachia Center of Community Service. Today, everyone here can proudly acknowledge that this work on the part of many people has born fruit.

Meadowview First will begin advertising for the construction of the new facility this Sunday. It is anticipated that construction will commence in July and will be completed in January, 2007. Although attempts to preserve the Maiden Building as a location for the Center proved unsuccessful, in an effort to preserve its unique architecture and history, the new community center will be built as an exact replica.

I would like to say a word of thanks to a number of individuals who have been instrumental in the success of this project.

Ellen Davis, State Director for Rural Development, and her excellent staff deserve our recognition this afternoon for their efforts to secure the federal funds which we are announcing today. Susan Yates, Chairwoman of Meadowview First and the other Board members should be recognized for their steadfast commitment to the success and growth of the Center.

I would also like to commend Tal Stanley, the Director of Emory and Henry College's Appalachian Center for Community Service and his staff for their hard work in support of this project. I also want to thank my good friend Delegate Joe Johnson whose law firm has actually serves as the attorney for Meadowview First.

Thanks should be extended to Tony Rector, who does an excellent job representing Meadowview on the Washington County Board of Supervisors, and the entire Board of Supervisors deserves our thanks for their support of the project. I want to thank Howard Chapman, Executive Director of the Southwest Virginia Community Health Systems, for his leadership in providing quality health care in our region. And a special thanks to The Virginia Health Care Foundation, Carolyn Levine, Alice Dow and all the many generous individual donors whose support has made this project possible.

Finally, I want to recognize my District Administrator, Laura Lee, for her persistent and persuasive work in support of this project.

The establishment and construction of this Community Center and Health Clinic is a significant and vital step towards meeting the health care and educational needs of the Meadowview community and Washington County residents.